



**RFA2**

**Request for Application  
for the Child Signature Program  
Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement**

**FY 2012-13 through FY 2014-15**

**March 2012**





## **Child Signature Program RFA #2**

### **Timeline of Key Dates**

<b>March 30, 2012</b> Friday	CSP RFA #2 mailed to all 58 First 5 County Executive Directors
<b>March 30, 2012</b> Friday	CSP RFA #2 posted on the First 5 California (F5CA) Website at: <a href="http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/commission/funding.asp">http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/commission/funding.asp</a>
<b>April 10, 2012</b> Tuesday	CSP RFA #2 Information Session/Conference Call
<b>April 30, 2012</b> Monday	Questions on CSP RFA #2 due to F5CA; responses will be posted regularly through May 14, 2012
<b>May 21, 2012</b> Monday	<b>Application submission deadline.</b> F5CA must receive electronic and print copies of the application package (original application with signature, three additional hard copies, and one electronic copy). The one (1) electronic copy must be emailed to <a href="mailto:csp@ccfc.ca.gov">csp@ccfc.ca.gov</a> . The four (4) hard copies must be received in the F5CA office by 5:00 p.m. on May 21, 2012. F5CA's business hours are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, except holidays. See Application Submission Requirements in RFA #2.
<b>June 8, 2012</b> Friday	F5CA posts on its Website matching awards and mails agreements to Lead Agencies.
<b>July 2, 2012</b> Monday	Program Start Date

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# Child Signature Program

## RFA1 FY 2012-15

### For Current PoP Counties

#### Application Release (February 2012):

#### Quality Enhancement of PoP

- Designed to enhance the quality of PoP in the existing eight PoP counties for three years. This RFA requires matching funds from counties.

## RFA2 FY 2012-15

### For All 58 Counties

#### Application Release (March 2012):

#### Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement

- Supports assessments to determine strengths and challenges of identified county centers and classrooms.
- Designed to provide targeted training and quality improvement support in all 58 counties for local centers and classrooms not yet participating in PoP.
- This RFA does not require matching funds from counties.

## RFA3 FY 2013-15

### For Potential PoP Counties

#### Application Release (February 2013):

#### Quality Enhancement of PoP

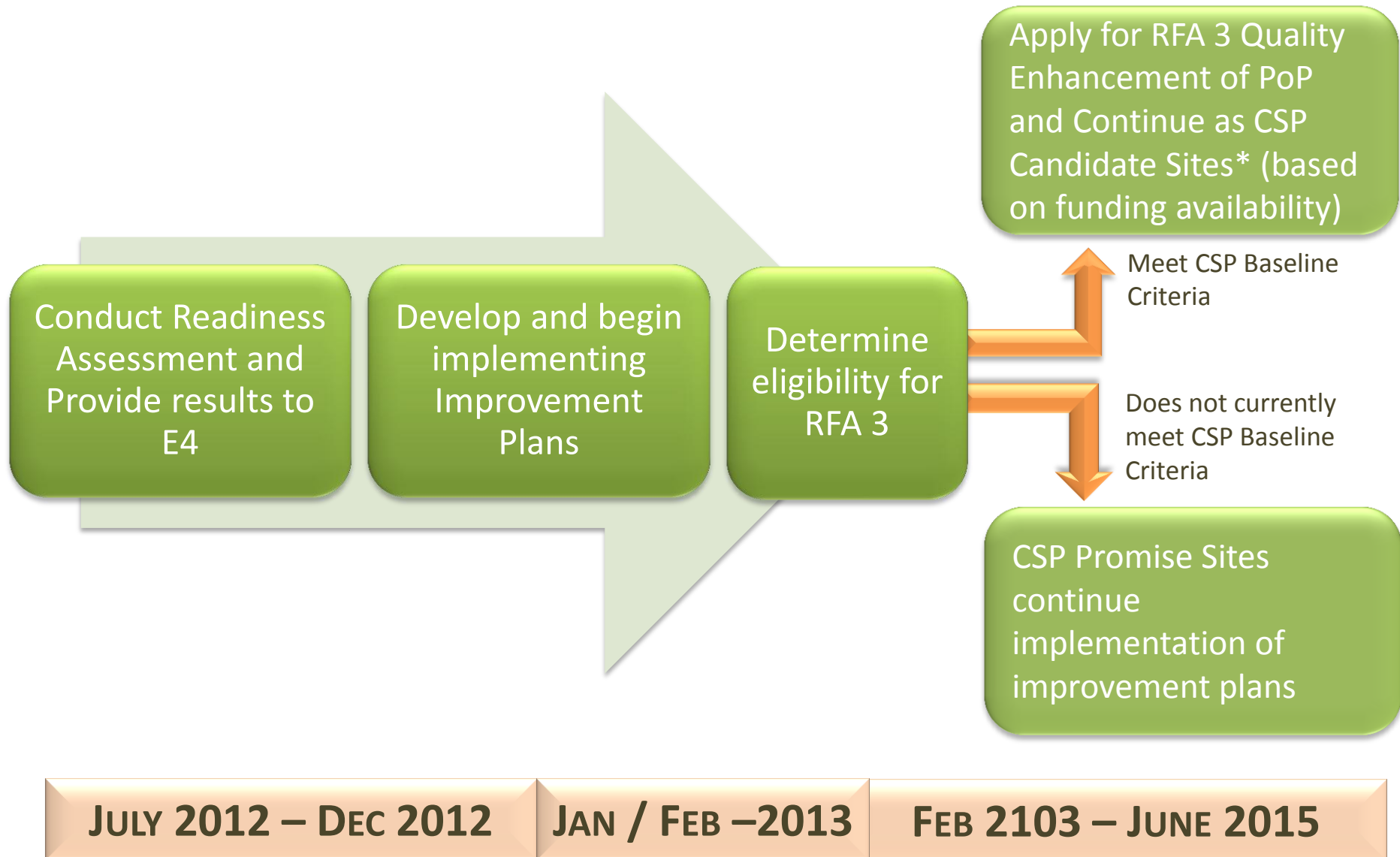
- Designed to enhance the quality of PoP in qualifying non-PoP counties for two years. This RFA requires matching funds from counties.

## TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND IMPROVEMENT SUPPORT

### Access to Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4):

Designed as a "Learning Academy" to provide specific training and assistance to facilitate quality improvements in identified early learning centers across all counties.

# Phases of the Readiness Assessment & Quality Improvement



## I. INTRODUCTION

### History of First 5 California

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, the California Children and Families Act, which established the California Children and Families Commission (also known as First 5 California) to promote, support, and improve the early development of children from the prenatal stage through five years of age. Since its inception, First 5 California has launched innovative programs and services designed to help young children grow up healthy and do well in school and in life. The promise of First 5 California is to invest in services and programs that directly benefit children and families, build upon past successes and the latest research, and advocate for a sustainable early childhood system for future generations.

### Strategic Plan – Signature Program Development

In 2007, First 5 California adopted its current Strategic Plan, which called for convening a workgroup designed to assess the ongoing viability of its programs and to provide recommendations for Measurable Program Goals (MPGs). In July 2009, the workgroup developed a comprehensive preliminary set of MPGs for consideration. Through a statewide public input process, First 5 California staff shared these preliminary MPGs with the early learning community to solicit feedback. At its October 2009 meeting, the State Commission approved the resulting MPGs and early learning program concepts. Staff used these as the foundation for developing Signature Programs designed for three specific program recipients: Child, Teacher, and Parent. Each Signature Program builds upon past and present First 5 California programs with proven track records of effectiveness, such as Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES), CARES Plus, Migrant Education Even Start (MEES), Power of Preschool (PoP), School Readiness, and the Special Needs Project.

### Background

Each year, more than half a million babies are born in California. With approximately 2.8 million children under the age of 5, California has more children ages 0 to 5 years than any other state.<sup>1</sup> California also has the largest number of children in the U.S. living in poverty, contributing to a high number of families with limited access to the resources necessary to help children grow up healthy and ready to succeed. The needs of these families are especially acute as funding for early learning programs has been cut dramatically, which limits access and weakens the quality, infrastructure, and services that families rely upon to raise healthy, well-prepared children.

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<sup>1</sup> Census Bureau. California Quick Facts. Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06000.html>



A growing body of research confirms the importance of quality early learning experiences to effectively prepare young children not only for school, but for life. A recent RAND study<sup>2</sup> indicates that quality early care and education are still lacking throughout California despite First 5 California's unrelenting efforts to increase and improve early learning programs. In addition, many children who need quality programs most often do not have access to them. California's current economic situation increases the likelihood that access to such programs may suffer, especially for at-risk children.

A child who is considered to be "at-risk" and who does not receive quality early care and education faces the likelihood of a life filled with disadvantages. At-risk children are 50 percent more likely to be placed in special-education classes, 25 percent more likely to drop out of school, 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime, and 40 percent more likely to become a teen parent.<sup>3</sup>

Conversely, at-risk children who receive high-quality early care and education benefit greatly, often exceeding national averages on measures of school readiness. In fact, when controlling for risk factors such as maternal education, race, and parents' ages, these gains persist. Kindergarteners who spend their early years in high-quality early care and education programs arrive at elementary school ready to learn and on par with middle-income peers. These children experience the benefits that result from early instruction that includes a focus on language development, literacy, vocabulary growth, and early math skills.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, children in a high-caliber early learning environment acquire the skills that allow them to develop positive relationships with adults and peers, while they learn to withstand disappointments and other pressures.

First 5 California's continued commitment to improve quality early learning experiences and environments positions the agency as an effective child development champion by supporting and implementing quality programs for children ages 0 through 5. First 5 California will continue to build on and enhance research-based programs while integrating the best of past First 5 California programs. Through investments in programs such as PoP and CARES Plus, First 5 California continues to help meet the growing demand in our state for making quality early learning programs accessible to children and families of greatest need.

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<sup>2</sup> Karoly, L.A., GhoshDashtidar, B., Zellman, G.L., Perlman, M., & Fernyhough, L (2008). *Prepared to learn: The nature and quality of early care and education for preschool-age children in California*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

<sup>3</sup> Ounce of Prevention, <http://www.ounceofprevention.org/about/why-early-childhood-investments-work.php>

<sup>4</sup> Ounce of Prevention, <http://www.ounceofprevention.org/about/why-early-childhood-investments-work.php>

## Power of Preschool – Building on Success

From 2005 through 2009, First 5 California created and implemented the Power of Preschool (PoP) program for three- and four-year-olds in low-performing school districts. From its inception as a demonstration project in nine counties, PoP provided quality enhancement funding to raise the standards for public and private preschool programs. To promote quality preschool experiences, local programs were required to meet criteria in four main categories: 1) program, 2) teaching staff, 3) policy and fiscal characteristics, and 4) family partnerships. Participating counties were expected to align their programs with the California Department of Education *Infant/Toddler and Preschool Learning Foundations* and implement the *California Preschool Curriculum Frameworks*. The nine original counties (Los Angeles, Merced, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Ventura, and Yolo) participated in the program to improve child and teacher outcomes – including strong school readiness levels for children, high-quality learning environments, and well-trained teachers.

As a result of the success of PoP, the State Commission approved continued funding for Fiscal Years (FY) 2010-11 and 2011-12 to extend the program and expand services to infants and toddlers wherever possible. Of the current eight PoP counties (San Mateo no longer participates), four of them (Merced, San Francisco, Ventura, and Yolo) expanded services to infant/toddlers. The current program funding authorization ends on June 30, 2012.

Because PoP was designed as a demonstration program, the significant lessons learned were instrumental in the creation of the Child Signature Program (CSP) and policy development. These lessons included:

- The need to effectively address language barriers
- The importance of serving children with special needs
- The value of including:
  - documentation
  - screening
  - data collection
  - reporting requirements
- The need to improve instructional support

The design of the CSP reflects information resulting from several recent evaluations, along with research-based evidence on effective practices to enhance school readiness in early education settings. The 2009 PoP Program Evaluation Report<sup>5</sup> listed 11 recommended criteria and six areas of improvement for use in the design and evaluation of a high quality preschool program. First 5 California has included all of the recommended criteria and areas of improvement in the design of the CSP.

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<sup>5</sup> **Power of Preschool** Program Evaluation Report September 2009.

A more recent evaluation of PoP (2011) conducted by UCLA found PoP preschool and infant/toddler classrooms to be of high quality and that PoP teachers are well qualified. The evaluation further revealed that despite discrepancies in the methods counties used to calculate their reported Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) scores, the number of children who were at the DRDP developmental level of “Integrating” between the fall and spring assessments showed a 455 to 1,124 percent increase in all four measured areas. Counties successfully engaged parents, supported kindergarten transitions, and provided educational opportunities to assess and improve teacher quality. Reported challenges included the coordination of services and agreement on how to provide them, improving services for Dual Language Learners and children with special needs, and engaging school districts and principals struggling to maintain basic school programs. As a result of the success of PoP, the CSP has adopted the PoP program requirements as its baseline for raising quality to a higher level.

Recent results from the national Educare model (see Attachment A) also influenced the design of the CSP. Educare is a promising early childhood education intervention serving infants, toddlers, and preschoolers from low-income families. Educare provides high-quality early care and education within a model that incorporates key indicators of quality derived from best practices and research. These indicators include a well-educated and supported staff; a focus on children’s social-emotional development as well as language, continuity of care, literacy, and early math skills; reliance on evidence-based practices; and extensive family involvement opportunities and support. Children who enroll in Educare as infants or toddlers enter kindergarten with school readiness and vocabulary scores near the national average—much higher than children from low-income families in other large-scale programs for preschoolers. Early and continued attendance at Educare centers serves to prevent the achievement gap between vulnerable children and advantaged ones. Initiatives are underway in California to build Educare schools in Santa Clara and Los Angeles counties. Educare leaders have provided information and training to five PoP county teams over the past two years. Additionally, they have advised First 5 California on the implementation of selected Educare core features as part of the Child Signature Program.

## **II. PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE CHILD SIGNATURE PROGRAM**

### **Purpose of the Child Signature Program**

The primary purposes of the Child Signature Program (CSP) are:

1. To enhance the quality of the current Power of Preschool (PoP) program by implementing three research-based program elements:
  - Instructional Strategies and Teacher-Child Interactions
  - Social-emotional Development
  - Parent Involvement and Support

2. To provide all 58 counties the opportunity to increase quality in early learning programs for children ages 0 to 5 in identified early care and education (ECE) centers where the educational divide is greatest (i.e., neighborhoods in catchment areas of elementary schools with Academic Performance Index [API] scores in deciles 1-3; exceptions may be made for small counties).

In a state as diverse as California, it is critical that culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies are used in early care and education environments. As a result, First 5 California Children and Families Commission adopted the *Principles on Equity* on October 18, 2001 (revised April 2008), with a commitment to meet the diverse needs of the state's children and families. All counties participating in the CSP must comply with the *Principles on Equity*. By implementing the *Principles on Equity*, CSP classrooms will ensure that curricula and instructional strategies, governance, communication, family support, community-based services, and all aspects of the CSP incorporate practices that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the population served (see Attachment B for additional information). The *Principles on Equity* are to influence all aspects of the CSP.

The *Principles on Equity* address four major areas, each of which is incorporated into the Readiness Assessment, and must be incorporated into centers and classrooms participating in the CSP:

- Inclusive Governance and Participation
- Access to Services
- Legislative and Regulatory Mandates
- Results-based Accountability

First 5 California has designed the CSP with several key goals targeting children, teachers, and families, including the following:

- Children in California at greatest risk for school failure will enter school with the skills to be successful.
- Children living in elementary school catchment areas with API scores in deciles 1-3 will have access to quality early learning programs.
- Teacher effectiveness in working with culturally and linguistically diverse children ages 0 to 5 will be optimized.
- Teacher effectiveness in working with special needs children ages 0 to 5 will be optimized.
- All parents with children ages 0 to 5 living in elementary school catchment areas with API scores in deciles 1-3 will have the knowledge and skills to successfully advocate for their child's education.
- All parents with children ages 0 to 5 living in elementary school catchment areas with API scores in deciles 1-3 will be knowledgeable and involved in their children's age-appropriate cognitive and behavioral development.

The design of the CSP integrates proven elements of other First 5 California funded programs, selected core components of Educare, and continues to align with the California Department of Education *Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations* (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/itfoundations.asp>), *California Preschool Learning Foundations* (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp>) and *California Preschool Curriculum Framework* (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psframework.asp>).

### III. CSP FUNDING APPLICATIONS

In order to meet the goals of the Child Signature Program, as described above, the various strands of the CSP will be initiated through a series of Requests for Application (RFA):

RFA	Projected Release	Title and Description
#1	February 17, 2012	<b>Quality Enhancement of PoP</b> Designed to enhance quality in the existing eight counties currently receiving PoP Bridge FY 2011-12 funding through the incorporation of three Quality Enhancement Program Elements: Instructional Strategies and Teacher-Child Interactions, Social-Emotional Development, and Parent Involvement and Support. These enhancements are facilitated through the work of Essential Staff consisting of the Program Coordinator, Local Evaluator, Early Education Expert, Mental Health Specialist/Resource and, Family Support Specialist. RFA #1 requires matching funds from counties.
#2	March 2012	<b>Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement (this document)</b> Designed to provide all 58 counties the opportunity to increase quality in early learning programs for children of greatest need ages 0 to 5. RFA #2 will <u>not</u> require matching funds from counties.
#3	February 2013	<b>Quality Enhancement of PoP for non-PoP Counties:</b> Designed to allow counties not currently participating in PoP to apply for two years of Quality Enhancement (Attachment C1) funding for classrooms meeting Teacher/Provider Qualifications (Attachment D) at the First 5 Quality level and CSP Baseline Criteria (Attachment C2). The content of RFA #3 (2013) will be similar to that of RFA #1 and will require matching funds from counties.  <b>RFA #3 will NOT be open to current PoP counties.</b>

## **Description of the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Requirements**

In order to accomplish the purpose and goals of the CSP as previously articulated, three integrated research-based program elements (described above) will be implemented. This RFA is the second of three RFAs (referred to as RFA #2) that comprise the CSP. First 5 California recognizes the need for making high quality early learning programs available and accessible to children and families of greatest need. Consequently, this RFA will focus on providing all 58 counties the opportunity to increase quality in early learning programs serving the highest risk children ages 0 to 5. This RFA will solicit applications from counties willing to participate in center-level Readiness Assessment and data collection to determine levels of strength, identify areas for improvement and, work to improve program quality.

This RFA will accomplish two major purposes: 1) completion of a Readiness Assessment by centers and classrooms selected for participation, and 2) based on the results of the Readiness Assessment, centers and classrooms will engage in training opportunities designed to advance quality to a higher level throughout the term of the program. During the process of completing the Readiness Assessment, participating centers and classrooms will determine whether they meet the CSP Baseline Criteria and Teacher/Provider Qualifications that are required for applicants of RFA #3. The centers and classrooms who meet the criteria will be referred to as CSP RFA #3 Candidates. Centers and classrooms who are not eligible to apply for RFA #3 will engage in training and technical assistance activities that focus on quality improvement. These activities will assist them in meeting CSP Baseline Criteria and Teacher Provider Qualifications throughout the term of RFA #2. These centers and classrooms will be referred to as CSP Promise Sites.

Due to the success of the PoP program and its focus on research-based effective practices to enhance school readiness in early care and education programs, First 5 California is using an abbreviated version of the PoP Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Quality Program Requirements. These requirements will henceforth be referred to as the CSP Baseline Criteria (Attachment C2), and will serve as the minimum quality standards to which participating ECE sites will aspire.

The intent of the Readiness Assessment is to capture and inform participants of where they fit within the PoP trajectory of quality and CSP quality enhancement program elements. Results from the Readiness Assessment process will determine where classrooms need to focus their efforts to improve quality in order to meet the CSP Baseline Criteria. Classrooms whose results from the Readiness Assessment determine that they meet all CSP Baseline Criteria and Teacher/Provider minimum qualifications (Attachment D) will be eligible to apply for two years of CSP Quality Enhancement funding (RFA #3). Counties awarded RFA #3 funding may have their funding for RFA #2 decreased based on the remaining number of centers and classrooms continuing on into year two of the program (see Section XI, Part A)

After the first fiscal year of the program (FY 2012-13), participants will either continue to comply with the requirements of RFA #2 and focus on quality and system improvement activities identified through the Readiness Assessment or, if awarded CSP Quality Enhancement funding through RFA #3, will no longer fall under the provisions of RFA #2 once their funding begins in FY 2013-14.

To support completion of the Readiness Assessment and facilitate ongoing quality improvement activities, this RFA provides funding for an Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS). Recognizing that counties have sites with classrooms at varying levels of quality, the ELSS will be responsible for coordinating and facilitating training, technical assistance and other support for identified centers and classrooms selected by the county to work toward achieving the CSP Baseline Criteria, Teacher/Provider Qualifications and/or the CSP quality enhancement program elements. Success of the CSP will depend on the expertise, skills, and effectiveness of the ELSS. A recommended job description identifying the minimum required education, knowledge, and skills for the ELSS is provided in Attachment E. Requirements and desired outcomes for the ELSS are described in Section VI, Part D1 of this RFA and in the job description.

Through services rendered from a separate contractual process, First 5 California will provide training and technical assistance to support the CSP. Access to training, technical assistance, and quality improvement support will be made possible through a learning and improvement academy referred to as the Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4). Through training and technical assistance, the E4 will serve as the primary statewide resource designed to facilitate quality improvement in early learning centers participating in any of the three CSP RFA opportunities. For purposes of this RFA, the E4 will organize and conduct trainings and meetings and collaborate with the ELSS to support counties, centers, and classrooms as they undertake the Readiness Assessment and the resulting continuous program improvement opportunities. In an effort to maximize staff time and minimize cost to counties, the E4 will strive to conduct trainings whenever possible through virtual learning supports/mediums (i.e., go-to meetings, webinars, etc.) on identified topics. Training also may take place regionally. Ideally, the E4 will train the ELSS to go back to their respective counties to connect CSP participants with the appropriate E4 training. The E4 also will hold an annual statewide meeting where all ELSS staff will come together to exchange knowledge and network together. Attendance by ELSS staff at the annual on-site meeting is a requirement of this RFA.

Only First 5 county staff, centers, and classrooms identified for and participating in the CSP RFA #2 will be eligible for training and technical assistance provided by the E4. Additional information regarding the support and training for counties and classrooms is described in Section VI, Part D2.



The expectation for all counties and classrooms selected to participate and remain in RFA #2 is a commitment to engage in quality improvement activities throughout the three-year funding period (FY 2012-13 through 2014-15). Participating classrooms must make a commitment to:

1. Complete a Readiness Assessment.
2. Develop and implement an improvement plan.
3. Assist with the identification of areas for technical assistance and training.
4. Complete E4 training as appropriate.
5. Apply training concepts in practice.
6. Actively pursue networking opportunities/activities to enhance quality in centers and classrooms.
7. Work collaboratively with the ELSS.
8. Comply with all requirements of RFA #2 (i.e., progress reports).
9. Collect data that monitors progress and demonstrates improvement in quality.
10. Participate in local and statewide evaluations.
11. Implement the *Principles on Equity*.
12. Have all staff complete the on-line tobacco training funded by First 5 California.

### **State Commission Authority**

California Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 130105(d)(1)(B) authorizes the expenditure of funds from the California Children and Families Trust Fund to ensure that children are ready to enter school, and for programs focusing on education, including, but not limited to, the development of educational materials, professional and parent education and training, and technical support for county commissions.

HSC Section 130125(i) provides First 5 California the authority to allocate funds to county commissions to carry out the purposes of the California Children and Families Act.

In October 2011, the First 5 California Children and Families Commission approved funding of up to \$45 million per fiscal year for three years for the Child Signature Program, and further authorized unspent funds to carry over into subsequent fiscal years.

### **Period of Program Authority**

The period of program performance for the Child Signature Program is July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2015. Local expenditures prior to and after the period of program performance will not be eligible for reimbursement.



## IV. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

### A. Overview

Only First 5 county commissions are eligible to apply for Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement funds offered through this RFA. The Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement RFA is designed to provide all 58 counties with the opportunity to increase quality in local early learning programs for children 0 to 5. In particular, this RFA provides support for counties to include and support identified centers and classrooms that are not currently participating in the PoP Bridge program or included in the county application for RFA #1. The centers and classrooms participating in RFA #2 will be known collectively as **“CSP Promise Sites.”**

Sites and classrooms selected by the county must serve children ages 0 to 5 who live in elementary school catchment areas with a current Academic Performance Index (API) score in deciles 1-3. An exception will be made to extend the API to 1-5 only for counties that can demonstrate that they have no elementary school with an API ranking at or below the 3<sup>rd</sup> decile.

NOTE: Use the most current API scores available at the following website:  
[www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/)

During the process of completing the Readiness Assessment and subsequent improvement activities, First 5 California anticipates that some centers and classrooms will determine that they meet CSP Baseline Criteria and Teacher/Provider Qualifications and are eligible to be included in the application for RFA #3. These centers and classrooms will be referred to as **“CSP RFA #3 Candidate Sites” (CSP Candidates)**. Other centers and classrooms will determine that they are not eligible for RFA #3 (e.g., centers and classrooms in PoP Counties), or that they need additional time and participation in quality improvement activities to meet CSP Baseline Criteria and/or Teacher/Provider Qualifications. These centers and classrooms will continue to be referred to as **CSP Promise Sites**. Centers and classrooms not included in county applications for RFA #3, or not funded as part of RFA #3 will be expected to engage in training and technical assistance activities provided by the ELSS and the E4 through 2015.

### B. Non-PoP Counties

All 50 counties not currently participating in the PoP program are eligible to apply for this RFA. If funded, those counties will be asked to identify centers and classrooms to participate in the Readiness Assessment, training, technical assistance, and targeted improvement activities described below. If a county chooses to include Family Child Care (FCC) centers in this opportunity, the county must articulate in its application specifically how it will support and monitor

the FCC's readiness and quality improvement activities. The ultimate objectives of this RFA are:

- To enhance the opportunity of participating sites to meet CSP Baseline Criteria and Teacher/Provider Qualifications, and to exceed those criteria in preparation for RFA #3.
- To position sites for inclusion in county applications for two years of quality enhancement funding to be made available through RFA #3.

### **C. PoP Counties**

The existing eight counties currently under contract with First 5 California for PoP Bridge FY 2011-12 funding are also eligible to apply for this RFA. Submitting an application for RFA #1 does not exclude a PoP county from applying for RFA #2. If funded, existing PoP counties will be asked to identify centers and classrooms not currently funded by PoP, and not included in the application for RFA #1, to participate in the Readiness Assessment process, training, technical assistance, and targeted improvement activities of the E4. Appropriate sites for inclusion in the PoP county's application would be those requiring a greater level of support to achieve the CSP Baseline Criteria. If a county chooses to include Family Child Care (FCC) centers in this opportunity, the county must articulate specifically how it will support and monitor the FCC's readiness and quality improvement activities. RFA #3 will not be open to current PoP counties.

### **D. Participation by a Consortium**

Counties who are unable to meet the minimum number of classrooms for participation in RFA #2 (Section XI, Part A) may form a consortium with neighboring counties who fall under the same circumstance. The consortium must select a Lead Agency from the consortium participants to serve as the single applicant for RFA #2. The Lead Agency will be responsible for fiscal and programmatic accountability of all consortium participants.

## **V. TARGET POPULATION**

Funding for the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process is available to counties with centers and classrooms with the potential of working toward meeting requirements to be CSP RFA #3 Candidates, for those centers and classrooms that might eventually qualify in future funding efforts as CSP Quality Enhancement participants. The target populations to be served in these centers and classrooms are:

- Children ages 0 to 5 who live in elementary school catchment areas with a current Academic Performance Index (API) score in deciles 1-3. An exception will be made to extend the API to deciles 1- 5 only for counties that can demonstrate that they have no elementary schools with an API ranking at or below the 3<sup>rd</sup> decile.

- Infants/toddlers ages 0 to 3 who meet income eligibility based on the Schedule of Income Ceilings used by the California Department of Education, as referenced in Attachment F.

### **Additional Eligibility for Target Population**

Priority will be given to new or existing classrooms being built or currently serving children in high priority areas for children ages 0 to 5 as defined by the most recent Needs Assessment conducted by the county's Local Child Care and Development Planning Council (see <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/lpc.asp> for more information). Priority also is given to centers and classrooms where the majority of children served are Dual Language Learners and/or children of migrant workers and/or have special needs.

For preschool children, income eligibility does not apply. Eligibility is determined based on whether or not the child resides in a low-performing school attendance area and meets the specific target populations described above.

For infants and toddlers from centers and classrooms participating in the CSP, however, their families must be income eligible based on the California Department of Education (CDE) income ceiling criteria. Attachment F shows the income ceilings for child care and development programs funded through CDE. This information establishes the parameters necessary for defining "economically disadvantaged" to determine eligibility for infant and toddler programs.

Counties with centers and classrooms identified for participation in RFA #2 must collect appropriate documentation of family income and size to make determinations of family income eligibility at those sites, consistent with the methodology set forth in the Funding Terms and Conditions for applicable CDE child care and development programs. Counties must retain this documentation for audit purposes. The Funding Terms and Conditions for applicable CDE child care and development programs are available at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ced/ftc2011.asp>

## **VI. DESCRIPTION OF THE READINESS ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESS**

This section of the RFA provides a description of the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process including rationale, desired outcomes, Readiness Assessment quality content areas, and the training and technical assistance to be offered by the Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS) and the Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4).

## A. Rationale

Research shows that high-quality Early Care and Education (ECE) programs include an emphasis on: 1) classroom instructional strategies and teacher-child interactions, including quality teacher training and professional development, and compelling instructional organization using engaging curricula; 2) social-emotional development of children; and 3) parent involvement and support. These features of quality are achieved through supportive leadership and governance, infrastructure supports, and several key programmatic features. They emphasize the use of research-based strategies for continuous improvement, starting early and emphasizing prenatal services, and providing family support services. A review of current literature and evaluations of the PoP program to date suggest that a foundation that promotes and sustains quality, including implementation of strategies necessary to improve quality in researched-based content areas, supports improved outcomes for children.<sup>6</sup>

## B. Desired Outcomes and Required Activities

The desired outcomes and required activities of participation in the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process include:

- Completion of a Readiness Assessment, which involves collecting and reporting baseline data to provide counties with information about where to support the implementation of quality enhancement in identified centers and classrooms.
- Identification of centers and classrooms as CSP Candidates – those that are ready to meet or exceed CSP Baseline Criteria and Teacher/Provider Qualifications for inclusion in county applications for CSP RFA #3.
- Identification of centers and classrooms as CSP Promise Sites– those that will participate in quality improvement activities to prepare them to meet or exceed CSP Baseline Criteria for future CSP funding opportunities beyond 2015.
- Development of implementation and improvement plans that identify content areas and detail strategies for improving the quality of services.
- Participation in training and technical assistance offered by the E4 and ELSS in at least one element from a minimum of three Readiness Assessment quality improvement content areas per year. This is described in Section C below and identified in improvement plans (for all sites in FY 2012-13, and for the remaining CSP Promise Sites at the beginning of each fiscal year thereafter).

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<sup>6</sup> Bridges M, Diggs N, Ly J, Fuller B. *Features of Quality Early Care and Education: Recent Rigorous Evidence on What Matters Most for Children*. Prepared for First 5 California, November 2011

- Monitoring of progress toward annual improvement in at least one element from a minimum of three Readiness Assessment quality improvement content areas determined by analysis of Readiness Assessment results.

The Readiness Assessment and subsequent Quality Improvement activities will inform the scope and activities of the Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4) and the types of training and technical assistance that will be offered to support counties and classrooms in achieving quality improvements. Counties will receive support for collecting and reporting readiness information through participation in the E4. Counties also will receive direct assistance from the county ELSS – Essential Staff funded through this RFA to support counties completing the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process on identified centers and classrooms. The training and technical assistance responsibilities of the ELSS and the expectations of the E4 are detailed in Part D of this section.

### **C. Readiness Assessment Content Areas**

The CSP Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process requires that counties: 1) collect and report information on the status of identified centers and classrooms; 2) develop and implement plans for achieving CSP Baseline Criteria and/or improvements in the Readiness Assessment content areas listed below; and 3) monitor progress toward achieving improvement objectives. To guide the Readiness Assessment process, First 5 California will provide a Readiness Assessment Preview (Attachment G), a Readiness Assessment Roadmap and, Readiness Assessment guide. The Readiness Assessment Preview provides an illustration of what counties may be asked to include in the actual Readiness Assessment (see Attachment G). The Readiness Assessment Roadmap and guide is forthcoming. A detailed technical assistance guide will be available prior to the implementation of the Readiness Assessment. The seven Readiness Assessment content areas are highlighted below:

#### **1. CSP Baseline Criteria**

The PoP program served as an evidenced-based, early learning model that has been shown to prepare the most vulnerable children ages 0 to 5 for success in school. To be included in applications for RFA #3, county identified centers and classrooms must meet CSP Baseline Criteria (for Promise Sites). Facilities must be licensed and comply with Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, community care facilities license regulations, including child care centers, or be license-exempt in accordance with Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Categories for the First 5 California CSP Baseline Criteria are listed in the table below and detailed in Attachment C2:

First 5 California CSP Baseline Criteria Requirement Categories		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target Population</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Parent Fees</li> <li>• Screening</li> <li>• Length of Day</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Articulation</li> <li>• Teacher/Provider: Child Ratio</li> <li>• Maximum Group size</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Education</li> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Nutrition Education</li> <li>• Tobacco Education</li> <li>• Physical Activity</li> <li>• Transition Support</li> <li>• Teacher/Provider Requirement</li> <li>• Environmental Rating Scales revised:</li> <li>• ECERS-F and ITES</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)</li> <li>• DRDP 2010</li> <li>• Principles on Equity</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Families</li> <li>• Connections</li> </ul>

Minimum staff qualifications to meet the “First 5 Quality” level are detailed for center director, classroom teachers, and assistant teachers in Attachment D.

## 2. Leadership and Governance

Stable leadership and supportive governance are critical in establishing the vision and goals that promote quality early learning environments, and in supporting the systems and structures that facilitate and sustain improved quality over time.<sup>7</sup> Evaluations of PoP to date suggest that shared governance and public-private partnerships with entities in the community, including government and non-profit agencies, businesses, and academic organizations, are important criteria for high-quality programs. Toward that end, assessing the current status of and planning for improvement in leadership and governance will include collecting and reporting information on the following:

- Experience of ECE leadership
- Concordance of ECE/program mission, vision, and values with First 5 California CSP
- Partnerships with key service providers and other stakeholders (e.g., contracts, formal MOUs)
- Shared governance
  - Community and parent engagement and participation in governance

<sup>7</sup> Sciarra, D.J., & Dorsey, A. G. (2002). *Leaders and supervisors in child care programs*. Albany, NY: Delmar.

- Governance body with key stakeholder involvement at the county and program levels

### 3. Infrastructure

The capacity and infrastructure to support: 1) participation in the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process, and 2) implementation and evaluation of quality elements, including tracking and managing data, are important to ensure quality improvements and ultimately, to demonstrate progress toward improved developmental outcomes for young children. Assessing a center or classroom's current status and planning for improvement in enhancing infrastructure will include collecting and reporting information on the following:

- Data collection resources – both the human resources and the sources of data on ECE needs and performance
- Capacity for evaluation requirements including:
  - Leveraging evaluation structures, processes, and personnel in existing early childhood networks and programs (e.g., collaboration with Head Start, institutions of higher learning, etc.)
  - Use and capacity of local evaluators
- Data systems for recording and managing required data
- Technology to support use of data at the classroom level and for broader evaluation purposes
- Technology to ensure remote access and support virtual participation in training and technical assistance offered through the E4

### 4. Classroom Instruction

A key indicator of ECE quality is classroom instruction. Research suggests that how children engage with teachers in learning activities drives quality. High-quality early care and education involves well-established routines and structures, characterized by creative and challenging learning tasks, many of which include rich oral language, phonemic awareness, and pre-reading instruction.<sup>8</sup> Assessing the current status of and planning for improvement in classroom instruction will include collecting and reporting information on the following:

- Classroom curricula that support general development, language and literacy, and early math skills

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<sup>8</sup> Burchinal, M., Howes, C., Pianta, R., Bryant, D., Clifford, R., & Barbarin, O. (2008). Predicting child outcomes at the end of kindergarten from the quality of pre-kindergarten teacher-child interactions and instruction. *Applied Developmental Science*, 12, 140-153.

- Approaches to supporting improved developmental outcomes for Dual Language Learners (DLL)
- Use of assessments to identify child needs, inform instruction, and measure child progress (e.g., ASQ, DRDP)
- Teacher quality (education levels and course work in ECE)
- Classroom organization that supports positive teacher-child interaction around learning activities
- Professional development requirements and opportunities for teachers and program staff
- Use of data and reflective practice, including use and capacity for Early Education Experts (EEE)
- Technology to support use of data at the classroom level

## 5. Social-Emotional Development

Social-emotional competence is considered to be an important aspect of school readiness. There is strong research support for the use of early screening measures and inclusion of social-emotional curricula in early learning programs<sup>9</sup>. For this reason, the CSP places a strong emphasis on targeted support of social-emotional development. Assessing current status and planning for improvement in supporting social-emotional development will include collecting and reporting information on the following:

- Curricula to support social-emotional development
- Behavior management strategies and approaches, teacher training, and coaching/mentoring to meet social-emotional needs of children and families
- Use of assessments to identify children's needs and monitor progress (e.g., ASQ, DRDP)
- Partnerships and resources that support meeting the social-emotional needs of children and families, including education to support parents in meeting their children's social-emotional needs
- Availability of mental health services and relationships with service partners
- Interdisciplinary approaches to meeting the social-emotional needs of children and families

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<sup>9</sup> Bagdi, A. & Vacca, J. (2005). Supporting early childhood socio-emotional well being: The building blocks for early learning and school success. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 33, 145-150.



## 6. Parent Involvement and Support

ECE centers that provide targeted family support services positively influence parenting practices and children's outcomes<sup>10, 11</sup>. Research suggests that family support services, when provided in conjunction with early childhood education interventions, produce meaningful effects on parenting practices and children's long-term outcomes. The CSP goals for parent engagement are to 1) encourage and increase parent knowledge about, interest and involvement in, and ability to advocate for their child's early learning needs and later school success for their children; 2) support parent-child interactions around developmentally appropriate activities; and 3) enhance parent-child relationships. Assessing the current status of and planning for improvement in parent involvement and support will include collecting and reporting information on the following:

- Parent programs, curricula, engagement approaches, and activities
- On-site/off-site family supports
  - Staff designated for parent support
  - Partnerships with other agencies and resources that facilitate family support and parent education opportunities (e.g., Mental Health Specialists)
  - Accommodation and support for siblings (e.g., child care during parent meetings)
- Home visiting programs/opportunities
- Assessment of parent participation, satisfaction, and outcomes

## 7. Infants and Toddlers

There is strong research evidence about the influence of early life experiences on children's development and outcomes, especially in early intervention research on the influence of prenatal care and early enrollment in early care and education programs<sup>12</sup>. In order to be considered for RFA #3, counties will be required to serve infants and toddlers in high quality environments: including at least one classroom that meets the CSP Baseline Criteria and the Teacher/Provider Qualification Quality Levels and serves no fewer than eight infants/toddlers by July 1, 2013. The teacher/child maximum ratio for those classrooms is 1:4 for infants; 1:4 for toddlers (can be 1:6 with toddler license).

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<sup>10</sup> Layzer, J.I., Goodson, B.D., Bernstein, L., Price, C. (2001). *National Evaluation of Family Support Programs. Volume A: The Meta-analysis. Final Report*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates Inc.

<sup>11</sup> Reynolds, S.J. (2005). Confirmatory program evaluation: Applications to early childhood interventions. *Teachers College Record*, 107, 2401-2425.

<sup>12</sup> Shonkoff, J.P., & Phillips, D. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press

The emphasis on starting early is reflected in CSP efforts to expand the number of infant-toddler classrooms. Assessing the current status of planning for implementation of CSP Baseline Criteria with infants and toddlers will involve collecting and reporting information on the following:

- Center-based slots for children age 0 to 36 months
- Participation or certification in PITC or other specialized infant toddler training for teachers/program staff
- Relationships with hospitals, infant mental health, home visiting programs
- System for outreach and filling slots (i.e., Child Find approaches/strategies)
- If incorporating Family Child Care (FCC), the FCC's access to county early care and education resources for the children and care provider

#### **D. Technical and Training Assistance for Participation in the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process**

This RFA provides two primary resources to facilitate the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process. Funding through this RFA will be used by the county to employ an Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS), and identified classrooms will receive Training and Technical Assistance support provided through the E4.

##### **1. Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS)**

First 5 California will fund through this RFA an Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS) to support counties, centers, and classrooms in the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process. The ELSS is essential staff to be hired by the First 5 county to support county participation in: 1) completing the Readiness Assessment; 2) developing center/classroom improvement plans; 3) engaging in improvement activities over the course of the funding period and beyond; and 4) providing resources and/or training to participating centers and classrooms. The majority of the funding offered to counties through this RFA is designated for the ELSS position. The ELSS is expected to continue to work at the county level to coordinate and facilitate training, technical assistance, and other support for all CSP Promise Sites throughout the funding period. Requirements and desired outcomes for the ELSS are outlined below.

**a. Requirements for the ELSS**

- Participate in Early Care and Education policy development and dialogue at the local and state levels.
- Provide leadership in the coordination and implementation of emergent Early Learning policy.
- Complete the on-line tobacco training titled “Kids and Smoke Don’t Mix ..” by January 2013.
- Provide training and technical assistance on the use of and completion of the Readiness Assessment.
- Work directly with centers and classrooms on data collection and completion of the Readiness Assessment tool.
- Work directly with centers and classrooms to develop improvement plans to achieve quality enhancements and improvement objectives (work on the improvement plans will begin no later than the second half of fiscal year 1).
- Collaborate with the E4 to complete summary and analysis of classroom Readiness Assessments.
- Collaborate with the E4 contractor to identify training and technical assistance needs from analysis and summary of Readiness Assessments and review of improvement plans.
- Where appropriate, serve as an extension of the E4 in providing training and technical assistance directly to centers and classrooms.
- Identify local county-level training and technical assistance resources and utilize those resources as county funding permits.
- Monitor and track participation of center/classroom (or other appropriate) staff in training and technical assistance.
- Monitor and provide feedback to centers and classrooms on progress toward improvement plan objectives.
- Accountable for completion of reporting requirements, including status update on improvement plans (actual work on the reports may be done by centers and classrooms).

**b. Desired Outcomes**

- Complete Readiness Assessments for all participating centers and classrooms.
- Complete and support implementation of improvement plans for all participating centers and classrooms throughout the duration of RFA #2 funding.
- Facilitate county and classroom staff participation in training or technical assistance provided by the E4 that address at least

one element from a minimum of three of the content areas targeted in improvement plans.

- At least 2/3 of targeted staff at participating centers and classrooms participate in training and technical assistance in at least one element in a minimum of three Readiness Assessment content areas customized for that group of centers and classrooms.

## **2. Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4)**

To support CSP quality enhancement and expansion, including the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process outlined in this RFA, First 5 California will fund a “learning and improvement academy” called the Early Education Effectiveness Exchange (E4). The E4 is designed to provide specific training and technical assistance to facilitate quality improvements in early learning centers participating in the CSP. This will include training and technical assistance in the content areas included in the Readiness Assessment and that constitute quality features for early care and education sites. It also will include strategies and techniques for effectively implementing improvements in complex environments, such as those specific to their home counties. Expectations for the E4 with regard to supporting counties and classrooms participating in the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process include:

- Train and provide technical assistance on the Readiness Assessment tool.
- Collaborate with the ELSS on analysis of the Readiness Assessments.
- Develop a template for classroom and county improvement plans with input from the ELSS and CSP program coordinators.
- Collaborate with ELSS to establish a process and structure that will allow efficient development and delivery of training and technical assistance content tailored to the needs of participating centers and classrooms.
- Provide and/or develop training on the curricula and supporting resources/tools for centers and classrooms based on analysis and synthesis of Readiness Assessment findings and review of improvement plans (in many instances E4 may only need to identify resources/tools rather than develop them).
- Provide/conduct training and technical assistance for ELSS using a train-the-trainer model, as well as training for centers and classrooms, as appropriate.
- Ensure knowledge capture for the CSP through development of documentation, manuals, archived media (e.g., webinars, videos, etc.).

- Recruit CSP program coordinators to share knowledge and provide expertise as part of the curriculum developed by E4 for the centers and classrooms participating in the Readiness Assessment and Quality Improvement Process.

## **VII. COUNTY/CENTER/CLASSROOM PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS**

The completion of the Readiness Assessment and the development and implementation of the subsequent improvement plans are a cooperative effort between the local county commission and its participating centers and classrooms. Training and technical assistance will be provided by E4 and/or the ELSS for the completion of the Readiness Assessment. Each participating classroom and/or center will be required to complete a classroom level Readiness Assessment with assistance from the ELSS.

Classrooms are required to cooperate and assist with the completion of any classroom-level assessment tools as part of the Readiness Assessment. This may include cooperating with outside Readiness Assessment observers to facilitate their assessment or validation of classroom environment, teacher-child interactions, deployment of curricula, etc. In addition, identified centers and classrooms will assist in the collection and reporting of other information specific to the classroom and center to facilitate the completion of the Readiness Assessment. This includes teacher education information, use of any curricula, center protocols, and available center-wide resources.

It is the role of the ELSS to ensure submission of the final report, which will include information that is summarized at the county level, in addition to individual classroom and center level data. County First 5 staff will assist the ELSS with assessing county-level resources that could be made available to sites, including, but not limited to, early childhood mental health specialists/resources, early childhood professional development and educational opportunities, and county resources for evaluation and assessment of classroom environments and teaching.

Based on the findings of the Readiness Assessment, the ELSS will assist each county First 5 in developing a county-level improvement plan based on analysis of the Readiness Assessment. Improvement plans should be comprehensive, identifying all of the features and content areas where there are opportunities for improvement. The county-wide plan will include target areas for improvement across participating centers and classrooms in addition to individual objectives for each center and/or classroom. Additionally, the county-level plan may include county-level strategies for tracking areas of improvement. First 5 California's E4 contractor will provide training on commonly identified areas for improvement across counties and centers.

**Funding to implement any improvements beyond the expertise and services of the E4 and the ELSSs is not available through this RFA. Consequently, it is**

quite possible that the improvement plan is more comprehensive than there are resources available. In that instance, counties will be encouraged to reconcile the Readiness Assessment results with available resources, and prioritize improvement areas that can be accomplished within the constraints of this RFA and the county's own resources. Improvement plans will ultimately need to be approved by First 5 California or its designee. At a minimum, centers and classrooms should participate in the training and support services that are offered through E4 and the ELSS. In addition, as part of their county-wide improvement plan, all participating classroom staff will complete an on-line tobacco training titled "Kids and Smoke Don't Mix .. ", funded by First 5 California.

Centers and classrooms will provide data and information as necessary to the ELSS to fulfill completion of any required reports.

## **VIII. EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **A. Overview**

An evaluation of activities related to this RFA is critical in order to understand the effectiveness of the ELSS, the Readiness Assessment process, the training and technical assistance provided by the E4, and the level of improvement achieved by participating sites. The successful completion of evaluation activities is dependent upon the engagement of targeted centers and classrooms. Consequently, counties funded through this RFA will agree to:

- Ensure that identified classrooms and centers participate fully in the Readiness Assessment and resulting improvement activities including, but not limited to, training and technical assistance provided by the ELSS and the E4 throughout the duration of their eligibility for CSP funding.
- Collaborate with the ELSS in the Readiness Assessment, develop an improvement plan, and provide updates on the status of improvement activities.
- Provide information about county-level resources that may be made available to support the enhancement of quality in participating centers and classrooms.

In FY 2012-13, the main elements of the evaluation for all CSP Promise Sites will be:

1. The successful completion of the Readiness Assessment
2. Development of the Improvement Plan
3. Status updates on the Improvement Plan
4. A process evaluation to determine:
  - Level of participation in training and technical assistance

- Local impact and improvements from training and technical assistance provided by the ELSS and by the E4

In FYs 2013-15, the main elements of the evaluation will focus on the remaining CSP Promise sites and include:

1. Annual revision of the improvement plan that builds upon prior accomplishments
2. A process evaluation to determine:
  - Level of participation in training and technical assistance
  - Local impact and improvements from training and technical assistance provided by the ELSS and by the E4

First 5 California understands and appreciates that counties funded through this RFA are likely to include centers and classrooms at different levels of readiness to proceed with and benefit from the resources listed above. As such, holding all counties, centers, and classrooms to the same evaluation standard may not be reasonable. Nonetheless, some degree of standardization is necessary in order to achieve evaluation results that are useful and demonstrate accountability in the use of funds. Consequently, the evaluation is likely to establish tiered outcomes that reflect an assessment of key characteristics and the results of the Readiness Assessment.

## **B. Data Collection and Reporting Responsibilities**

All counties and sites will be required to collect data and report on the measures described in the Readiness Assessment Roadmap that is forthcoming.

NOTE: The analysis of the Readiness Assessment likely will result in the establishment of cohorts with relative levels of readiness (e.g., RFA #3 Candidates along with continuing CSP Promise Sites). As such, both cohorts will be responsible for submitting data and reports by the end of the funding period in keeping with the sequence and types of improvement activities reasonably expected for that cohort. For example, centers and classrooms identified as RFA #3 Candidates may be expected to undertake and report the outcome of environmental rating assessments (e.g., ECERS, ITES, FCCERS), or child development assessments by the end of the funding cycle; centers and classrooms identified as continuing CSP Promise Sites may not have that requirement. The requirements will be determined in consultation among the E4 and the ELSS.

### **C. Reporting Procedures**

For FY 2012-13, the data collection and evaluation reporting process for the Readiness Assessment and the E4 contract will rely on the use of interactive data reporting templates to be developed by First 5 California.

## **IX. CSP QUALIFYING CRITERIA**

To receive funding for FYs 2012-13 through 2014-15, counties must meet the following program, staff, and participation criteria:

### **A. Program**

1. Serve no fewer than 10 classrooms.
2. Include a minimum of 1 infant/toddler classroom serving no fewer than eight infant/toddlers.
3. Serve no more than 30 classrooms with a full-time ELSS.
4. Include a minimum of 1 preschool classroom serving no fewer than 12 preschool children.
5. Only classrooms that participate in RFA #2 will be eligible to apply for RFA #3.
6. All participating centers and classrooms must have a completed Readiness Assessment and corresponding county-level Improvement Plan in place by the end of the third quarter of the first fiscal year of the program (March 30, 2013). Reporting for years 2 and 3 will consist of Improvement Plan revisions, updates and progress. Reports must be submitted January 31 and July 31 for FYs 2013-14 and 2014-15.

### **B. Staff**

1. Hire, redirect, or contract for the Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS) position described in Section VI, Part D above.
2. All staff participating in the CSP must complete the on-line training titled, "Kids and Smoke Don't Mix ..."

### **C. Participation**

Required staff (ELSS) and other staff, as appropriate, must:

1. Participate in the training and technical assistance that will be provided by the E4 designed to support the CSP.
2. The ELSS must attend an annual E4 on-site meeting.

## **X. CSP Reports**

In addition to the Readiness Assessment and development of Improvement Plans that are to be completed during the first half of the first fiscal year, CSP counties funded through this RFA are required to submit semi-annual progress reports. The



reports should demonstrate continuous classroom improvement toward achieving CSP program goals. These reports will summarize program trainings provided and attended, progress toward reaching objectives contained in center and classroom improvement plans, strengths and challenges, and actions taken to resolve those challenges. Additionally, counties must report changes during the reporting period to the Staff Plan.

The following information will be included in the semi-annual report:

1. Narrative description of the work completed by the ELSS and accomplishments, training received, provided and/or arranged.
2. Semi-annual progress updates for each participating center and classroom that tracks progress made in reaching elements identified in their Improvement plans.

## **XI. FUNDING TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **A. Fund Allocations**

The tables below show the available annual and maximum 3-year funding allocation amounts for which an applicant can apply to participate in CSP RFA #2 in FYs 2012-13 through 2014-15.

<b>Annual Funding Allocation Amounts</b>					
<b>Number of Classrooms</b>	10 - 14	15 -19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30
<b>Annual Funding Allocation</b>	\$35,000	\$52,500	\$70,000	\$87,500	\$105,000

<b>Maximum 3-Year Funding Allocation Amounts July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2015</b>					
<b>Number of Classrooms</b>	10 - 14	15 -19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30
<b>3-Year Maximum Allocation</b>	\$105,000	\$157,500	\$210,000	\$262,500	\$315,000

First 5 county commissions must identify at the time of application at least 10 participating classrooms and maintain those classrooms throughout the 3-year funding period to receive funding through RFA #2.

Counties who are unable to meet the minimum of 10 classrooms required to participate in RFA #2 may form a consortium with neighboring counties. The consortium must select a Lead Agency from the consortium participants to serve as the single applicant for RFA #2. The Lead Agency will be responsible for

fulfillment of all RFA #2 requirements and overall performance of all consortium participants.

Annual funding is reserved for each county based on the number of participating classrooms listed at the time of application. Reimbursement will be based on the number of participating classrooms on June 30 of each fiscal year at or below the funding level requested. After July 1, 2012, First 5 county commissions cannot make classroom substitutions during the RFA funding period.

Funding will be reduced for years two and three of the agreement if the number of participating classrooms decreases from the original number for which the applicant applied.

Counties may be eligible to receive services from the E4 for up to 30 additional **county-funded** classrooms beyond the 30 classrooms funded by First 5 California (maximum of 60 total classrooms per county). The **county-funded** classrooms must be funded at or above the classroom-to-funding ratio in the table referenced above. **County-funded** classrooms must be included as part of the RFA #2 application and those classrooms must comply with all RFA #2 requirements to receive support/resources from the E4.

## B. Program Funds

First 5 California will approve the reimbursement of expenditures that promote and support the following program elements:

1. Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS)
2. Travel costs for the ELSS to attend meetings (e.g., annual E4 on-site meeting)
3. Expenses that support the job responsibilities of the ELSS

Program funds may be used only for the following allowable expenditures:

**Personnel:** Employee or contract compensation (salaries and benefits) for the time devoted and identified specifically to the performance of the program for the following services:

- Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS)

**Operating Costs:** Expenditures for program activities must support the job responsibilities of the ELSS and include the following:

- Travel by the ELSS specifically related to the program and reimbursed at the rates and terms established by county commission policy
- Training materials and supplies

- Activities that support completion of the Readiness Assessment
- Activities and services that support the development and implementation of Improvement Plans (e.g., meetings, conference calls, webinars).
- Equipment and other capital expenditures under \$5,000

Expenses must be directly related to the core RFA #2 program requirements and must be traceable and auditable.

### **C. Funding Contingencies for Local Area Agreements**

- C.1. Any entity that enters into a Local Area Agreement (LAA) with First 5 California understands and agrees that the LAA is valid and enforceable only if sufficient funds are available in the appropriate account(s) of the California Children and Families Trust Fund to carry out the purposes of the Agreement. This Agreement shall be invalid and of no further force and effect if sufficient funds are not available in the appropriate account of the California Children and Families Trust Fund due to:
- A decrease in projected tax revenue collected pursuant to the Revenue and Taxation Code section 30131.2
  - Any additional restrictions, limitations, or conditions enacted by the legislature
  - Any statute enacted by the Legislature that may affect the provisions, terms, or funding for the Agreement in any manner
- C.2. In the event that there are insufficient funds in the appropriate account(s) of the California Children and Families Trust Fund any of the aforementioned reasons stated in C.1, the State of California and/or First 5 California shall have no liability to pay any funds whatsoever to the First 5 county commission or to furnish any other considerations under the LAA, and the First 5 county commission shall not be obligated to perform any provisions of the LAA.
- C.3. If full funding does not become available, First 5 California will amend the LAA to reflect program and related reduced funding and/or reduced activities.

### **D. Claims for Reimbursement**

To receive reimbursement for program expenditures, participating First 5 county commissions will submit a Claim for Reimbursement on a semi-annual basis. Claims for Reimbursement of actual and allowable expenses through RFA #2 are due to First 5 California as follows:

**Reporting Period**

**Due to First 5 California**

July through December  
January through June

February 15  
August 15

The Claims for Reimbursement must be submitted on the form provided by First 5 California and correspond to those expenditure categories found in the approved budget.

**E. Administrative Costs**

First 5 California will not reimburse administrative and/or indirect costs for the ELSS position and related expenses.

**F. Budget Amendment**

A **budget amendment** changes the current approved total program funding authority identified on the Local Area Agreement for the period of program performance. Program Budgets are set during the initial application approval process for the full funding period. A budget amendment request must be submitted and approved by First 5 California to use unallocated authority.

Upon approval of a budget amendment, counties will receive a revised funding letter with the approved supporting budget detail documents. Budget amendment requests must be submitted prior to the period for which expenditures will occur.

**G. Budget Revision**

A budget revision is an adjustment of a total or line item amounts within the approved funding authority period.

County commissions may adjust the annual budget, as deemed necessary, to accomplish the proposed program outcomes, consistent with the intended purposes of these funds.

The county commission must submit a budget revision to request carryover funds.

**H. Carryover Funds**

Carryover funds are unobligated, unspent balances from a previous year's approved budget that are transferred to the current year's budget, and are available to spend in addition to the current year's allocation. Carryover funds must be requested by the county commission through the budget revision process.

## **I. Annual Financial Audit**

Each First 5 county commission receiving and expending CSP funds must report audited financial information for funds received for CSP utilizing a supplemental schedule provided by First 5 California.

The supplemental schedule must be a component of the county commission's annual financial audit performed by an independent third party. The first audit is due to First 5 California by November 1, 2013, and annually thereafter by November 1.

The First 5 county commission is required to maintain auditable records, which must be made available, upon request, to representatives of First 5 California or its designee, or the State Auditor for on-site monitoring, reviews, and audits.

## **J. Program Compliance Review**

The purposes of a CSP compliance review are:

- Review and analyze the administration of the CSP at the county and site levels for participating entities.
- Through interviews and reviews of records, confirm internal controls and required record keeping is consistent with program requirements. These controls help safeguard the operational and fiscal integrity of the CSP.
- To provide information and feedback to county commission staff to assist them in taking corrective action, if necessary.

CSP compliance reviews will take place at intervals not more than once every twelve months. County commissions will be required to participate and produce records on request by First 5 California or the State.

## **K. Capital Outlay Expenditures**

First 5 California funds may **not** be used for capital expenditures as defined by the First 5 Financial Management Guide and the additional guidance in Fiscal Memorandums No. 01-04 and No. 01-06 found on the First 5 California web site at:

1. [http://www.cafc.ca.gov/pdf/annual\\_report\\_pdfs/FM01-04FixedAssets.pdf](http://www.cafc.ca.gov/pdf/annual_report_pdfs/FM01-04FixedAssets.pdf)
2. [http://www.cafc.ca.gov/pdf/annual\\_report\\_pdfs/FM01-06CapitalImprovements.pdf](http://www.cafc.ca.gov/pdf/annual_report_pdfs/FM01-06CapitalImprovements.pdf).

## **L. Dispute Resolution**

The First 5 county commission shall attempt to resolve disputes at the first staff level within First 5 California. If the dispute is not resolved at the first staff level, the Executive Director of the First 5 county commission, designated as the CSP administrator, may appeal the decision. Such an appeal can be made by submitting a written description of the issues and the basis for the dispute to the Chief Deputy Director of First 5 California within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving an initial response from the first-level determination of the dispute.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the First 5 county commission's written dispute, the Chief Deputy Director will review the facts of the dispute, and if deemed necessary, will meet with the First 5 county commission Executive Director or designee for purposes of resolving the dispute. The Chief Deputy Director shall make a determination and shall send written notification of the decision to the First 5 county commission, together with the reasons for the decision, within sixty (60) calendar days of the receipt of the First 5 county commission's notification of the dispute. The decision of the Chief Deputy Director shall be final.

## **M. Financial Management Compliance**

First 5 county commissions must use the First 5 Financial Management Guide (Guide) terms and definitions when reporting to or communicating with First 5 California. The guidelines and glossary contained in the Guide provide a common frame of reference and language for use between State and county commissions when addressing financial matters. The First 5 Financial Management Guide is available on the First 5 California Web site at: <http://www.cafc.ca.gov/commission/fiscal.asp>.

## **N. Direct and Indirect Costs**

First 5 California will not reimburse administrative and/or indirect costs for the ELSS position and related expenses.

## **O. Overpayment**

If it is determined that the First 5 county commission received an overpayment of First 5 California funds, First 5 California will seek recovery immediately upon discovery of overpayment by an invoice to the First 5 county commission for a refund of the overpayment amount within thirty (30) days after receipt of the invoice.

## P. Reimbursement Terms

First 5 California will reimburse county commissions for actual and allowable costs that are reasonable and consistent with the authorizing RFA, the corresponding approved budget, and signed Local Area Agreement. Actual and allowable costs are those costs for which the county commission has supporting documentation at the time of claim submission. All data reported on the Claim for Reimbursement must be actual and allowable costs.

Non-reimbursable costs include:

Non-Reimbursable State Costs
<b>Program Costs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current year agreement funds to pay prior or future year obligations</li> <li>• Promotional Items and memorabilia including gifts and souvenirs</li> </ul>
<b>Family Child Care Homes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumables (e.g., food and diapers)</li> <li>• Materials and supplies</li> </ul>
<b>Facilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital expenditures for general-purpose equipment, buildings, and land (items with a unit cost greater than \$5,000)</li> <li>• Facilities renovation and repairs</li> <li>• Fixed or Capital Assets or Capital Improvements (see Fiscal Memorandums 01-04 and 01-06)</li> <li>• Idle facilities or idle capacity except to the extent that they are 1) necessary to meet fluctuations in workload, or 2) necessary when acquired and are now idle because of changes in program requirements, efforts to achieve more economical operations, reorganization, termination, or other causes which could not have been reasonably foreseen</li> </ul>
<b>Travel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out-of-State, without prior approval</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcoholic beverages</li> <li>• Bad debts, including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectable accounts and other claims, related collection costs, and related legal costs</li> <li>• Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the governmental unit, lead agency, or partners</li> <li>• Entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any expenses directly associated with such costs</li> <li>• Goods or services for personal use of the First 5 county commission and partners employees</li> <li>• Legal costs incurred in defense of any civil or criminal fraud proceeding; legal expenses for prosecution of claims against the State of California</li> <li>• Lobbying costs</li> <li>• Organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions</li> </ul>

Reimbursement payments will be made only to the First 5 county commission holding the Local Area Agreement.

#### **Q. Compliance Requirements**

The First 5 county commission must adhere to the following fiscal and program requirements:

1. Participate fully in evaluation and data collection processes administered by First 5 California and/or its designee.
2. Provide all progress reports and reimbursement requests as requested by First 5 California.
3. Account for revenues and expenditures (both State and local) for the CSP RFA #2 funds separately in the annual financial audit, supplemental schedule.
4. Sign required certifications that attest to the accuracy of any program data submitted and claims for reimbursement requested.
5. Adhere to contractor responsibilities:
  - The First 5 county commission can subcontract with another agency to implement the CSP RFA #2 as an intermediary; however, the First 5 county commission is responsible for the overall performance of the CSP RFA #2 requirements and is responsible for expenditure and progress reports as described in this RFA, even if administered through an intermediary.
  - The First 5 county commission must adhere to the State of California's contracting requirement of three competitive bids, unless local county regulations or policies differ.
  - The First 5 county commission is responsible for collection of necessary data.

#### **R. Payment Withholds**

Failure to submit timely and accurate fiscal, audit, semi-annual progress reports, and data as required by First 5 California may result in the withholding of a disbursement of funds, until which time the required reports and/or data have been received. Serious delays in fiscal report submission may result in a written request by First 5 California for an accounting of expenditures or special review of fiscal and program activity. First 5 California may reduce or terminate program participation if First 5 California determines that a First 5 county commission has failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the RFA and/or its approved Agreement, including any amendments to the Agreement.



## **S. Retention of Program Records**

State funds disbursed by First 5 California to the First 5 county commission are subject to examination and audit by First 5 California or its designee, or the State Auditor, for a period of five (5) years after final payment of program expenditures. Therefore, adequate and accurate records must be retained for this period. First 5 California shall have access to the First 5 county commission's offices and/or the CSP sites, upon reasonable notice, during normal business hours, for the purpose of interviewing employees and inspecting and copying books, records, accounts, and other material that may be relevant to a matter under investigation, and for the purpose of determining compliance with the allowable uses of the CSP funds.

If an employee is multi-funded on a time accounting basis, then the employee's timesheet must indicate the actual amount of time spent in each program per day. The First 5 county commission must maintain accurate and verifiable financial data, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and standards for governmental entities

## **T. Supplement not Supplant**

The CSP funds shall be expended only for the purposes expressed in the RFA and may be used only to supplement existing levels of service. No monies from the California Children and Families Trust Fund shall be used to supplant state or local general fund money for any purpose.

## **U. Termination of Agreement**

First 5 California retains the option to terminate this Agreement without cause at its discretion, provided that written notice has been delivered to the First 5 county commission at least thirty (30) days prior to such termination date. If First 5 California terminates this Agreement at its discretion, the First 5 county commission will be entitled to compensation upon submission of an invoice and proper proof of claim, in that proportion which its services and products were satisfactorily rendered or provided and its expenses necessarily incurred pursuant to this Agreement, up to the date when notice of termination is received by the First 5 county commission ("the notice date"). The First 5 county commission will not be entitled to reimbursement for any expenses incurred for services and deliverables pursuant to First 5 California Request for Funding.

## **XII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

The following attachments are included in this RFA as resources for applicants to develop, implement, and monitor the CSP.

- Attachment A: Educare
- Attachment B: *Principles on Equity*
- Attachment C1: Mandatory CSP Quality Enhancement (QE) Program Requirements (Potential RFA #3 Applicants)
- Attachment C2: CSP Baseline Criteria (For Promise Sites)
- Attachment D: Teacher/Provider Qualification Quality Levels for Preschool (Pre-K) and Infant Toddlers (I/T) – Center-Based and Family Child Care Homes (FCCH)
- Attachment E: Job Description for Early Learning Systems Specialist (ELSS)
- Attachment F: Family Income Ceilings for Child Care and Development Programs
- Attachment G: Preview of First 5 California CSP Readiness Assessment
- Attachment H: CSP Program Glossary
- Attachment I: CSP Fiscal Glossary
- Attachment J: CSP Acronyms

### **XIII. HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDING**

#### **A. Request for Application (RFA) Information Session**

A CSP RFA #2 Information Session/Conference Call will be convened by First 5 California to provide an overview of the content of this RFA with potential applicants and to address questions. This call will provide the opportunity to ask questions and receive information regarding the content of this RFA. The date, time, and location for the session are listed below.

Any county/agency submitting an application is encouraged to participate in this RFA Information Session/Conference Call.

##### Information Session/Conference Call

Date: April 10, 2012

Time: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Details regarding how to access the information session will be sent to all potential applicants by email the week prior to the call.

**Questions regarding this RFA will be answered during the information session/conference call.** Additional questions regarding this RFA will be accepted **by e-mail, in writing, or by fax through Monday, April 30, 2012.** Please use “CSP RFA #2 Question” as the subject heading and send all questions to First 5 California:

E-mail: [csp@ccfc.ca.gov](mailto:csp@ccfc.ca.gov)

or

Fax: (916) 263-1360

## B. Application Eligibility Period

The funding period covers July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2015, and shall operate on a state fiscal-year basis (July 1 through June 30).

## C. Application Procedures and Processes

Applications must be developed and submitted in accordance with the terms described herein.

### 1. Application Due Date:

First 5 California must receive the CSP RFA #2 Application package by **May 21, 2012, by 5:00 p.m.** Application packages received later than May 21, 2012, will not be accepted or reviewed.

### 2. Application Submission Requirements

The application package must be submitted as follows:

- One original signed application;
- Three copies of the original application (total of four hard copies); and
- An electronic version of the application sent to [csp@ccfc.ca.gov](mailto:csp@ccfc.ca.gov) with the title "XX County CSP RFA #2 Application" as the Subject Header.

Applications must be complete when submitted. First 5 California holds no responsibility for the receipt or handling of applications that are not hand-delivered or received by the deadline. Applicants are encouraged to use express, certified, or registered mail, return receipt requested to confirm the date First 5 California receives the application.

#### Mail or hand-deliver applications to:

First 5 California  
CSP RFA #2 Application  
2389 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 260  
Sacramento, CA 95833

All applicants agree that by submitting an application, they authorize First 5 California to verify all claimed information.

- The original application shall include an original signature in **blue** ink.

- The application must be in 12-point Arial or Times New Roman, with one-inch margins on standard, white 8 ½ x 11-inch paper.
- Applications must be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Do not use binders, covers, folders, or sleeves.
- The program narrative section is not to exceed 10 pages. First 5 California requests that information in the application be thorough, yet as concise as possible. Do not attach additional pages or information not requested in the application.
- Complete a Program Funds Budget (Form 2) and Program Funds Budget Narrative (Form 3) for the entire funding period of the program. The budget narrative should present detailed justification of all expenditures and indicate any additional funding sources and amounts that will contribute to the program.

#### **D. Sequence of Application Components**

Each application must be assembled in the order outlined below and number responses accordingly. Each component must be present for the application to be considered complete. Please use the Application Checklist to guide the assembly of the completed application.

#### **Application Checklist**

The completed Application Checklist assists counties in the correct organization and sequencing of the application response. Completion of the checklist is optional and not a required part of the application response. However, completion of this Checklist will support compliance with the application submission requirements.

#### **Form 1: Application Cover Sheet**

This is the first form of the application package and contains the required signature (in blue ink) of the authorized representative for the county.

#### **Form 2: CSP RFA #2 Program Funds Budget (All Years)**

On Form 2, applicants must select from the drop-down box list the First 5 County Commission's name in the location indicated on the page. For Consortiums, the county acting as the Lead Agency responsible for fiscal and program requirements must complete this section of the form.

**Form 3: CSP RFA #2 Program Funds Budget Narrative (2-page maximum)**

On Form 3, applicants must insert the First 5 county commission's name in the location indicated in the page header. For consortiums, the Lead Agency responsible for fiscal and program requirements must complete this section of the form.

The Program Funds Budget Narrative must explain the expenditures proposed in the Program Funds Budget, including any proposed subcontract relationships.

The CSP RFA #2 Program Funds Budget Narrative page(s) are in addition to and not included in the Program Narrative 10-page limit.

**Form 4: CSP RFA #2 List of Participant Classrooms**

Form 4 contains the following two Excel worksheets:

- Form 4a: State Funded Classroom Profile Information. Form 4a is a required application form.
- Form 4b: County Funded Classroom Profile Information. Form 4b is optional, but must be completed and included in the application for participating classrooms that exceed the limit of 30 state funded classrooms. The applicant may include up to a maximum of 30 additional classrooms at the county's expense.

On each Worksheet, applicants must select from a drop-down box list the First 5 county commission's name in the location indicated. For consortiums, the Lead Agency responsible for fiscal and program requirements must complete this section of the form.

For classrooms with an API score greater than decile 3.0, the applicant must attach documentation that demonstrates the need for an exception to the API requirement.

**Form 5: Lead Agency Information**

On Form 5, applicants must first insert the First 5 county commission's name in the location indicated in the page header.

Applicants must check one box to identify whether the county received PoP Bridge FY 2011-12 funding or is a Non-PoP county.

Applicants must identify if the application represents a consortium of counties. If so:

- a. Identify the counties that will comprise the consortium
- b. Identify which county will serve as the lead county for purposes of the application
- c. Provide a description of how the lead county will coordinate compliance with RFA #2 requirements for all participating counties.

**Form 6: Program Narrative and Description (10-page maximum)**

The Program Narrative and Description section is limited to 10 pages.

Applicants must organize the response in the sequence listed below:

**Section 6A: Program Design**

The applicant must include in the response to Section 6A the following:

1. Describe the basis and criteria used for selection of classrooms identified for participation. (Note: Applicants must serve a minimum of one Infant/Toddler classroom with a minimum of 8 children and a minimum of one Preschool classroom with a minimum of 12 children.)
2. Describe how the county will assure engagement of the selected classrooms throughout the 3-year program period.
3. Identify the recruitment plans and projected timeline for recruitment and employment of the ELSS.
4. Provide an organizational diagram showing the ELSS placement and supervisory alignment within the organizational structure. Also describe the county resources and support available to the ELSS.

**Section 6B: Target Population and *Principles on Equity***

The applicant must include in the response to Section 6B the following:

Provide a summary of Form 4a and Form 4b to include the following:

1. Total number of **First 5 California funded classrooms** participating in CSP RFA #2 serving **preschool children**. Within those classrooms, identify the number of participating classrooms that meet the “Additional Eligibility” requirements described in Section V that include services to:

- a. Dual Language Learners
  - b. Special needs children
  - c. Migrant children
2. Total number of **First 5 California funded classrooms** participating in CSP RFA #2 serving **infant/toddlers**. Within those classrooms, identify the number of participating classrooms that meet the “Additional Eligibility” requirements described in Section V that include services to:
  - a. Dual Language Learners
  - b. Special needs children
  - c. Migrant children
3. Total number of **county funded classrooms** participating in CSP RFA #2 serving **preschool children**. Within those classrooms, identify the and number of participating classrooms that meet the “Additional Eligibility” requirements described in Section V that include services to:
  - a. Dual Language Learners
  - b. Special needs children
  - c. Migrant children
4. Total number of **county funded classrooms** participating in CSP RFA #2 serving **infant/toddlers**. Within those classrooms, identify the number of participating classrooms that meet the “Additional Eligibility” requirements described in Section V that include services to:
  - a. Dual Language Learners
  - b. Special needs children
  - c. Migrant children
5. Describe how the county First 5 will insure participating centers and classrooms are implementing the *Principles on Equity*.

### **Section 6C: Local and State Evaluation**

The applicant must include in the response to Section 6C the following:

1. Beyond the statewide evaluation and the evaluation requirements detailed in this RFA, describe any additional evaluation questions and objectives that will be addressed locally.

## **E. Review of Applications**

The First 5 California staff charged with the oversight of the review process will select a panel to review applications that are submitted according to the previously stated requirements. Applications that do not fully provide a comprehensive overview of the program may be required to provide additional information and program justification before a funding determination can be made.

The applicant must provide any additional information determined necessary by the application review panel within three business days from the date the written request is received by the county.